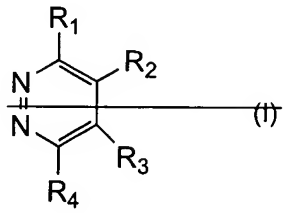
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

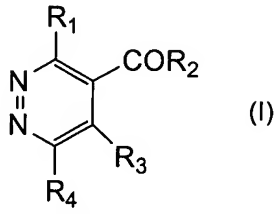
Please cancel claims 5–8, 11–13 and 15–18 without prejudice.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A compound of the formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



~~(I)~~



(I)

wherein

R_1 is halogen, aromatic ether, alkyl sulfonate, aryl sulfonate, alkyl phosphonate, aryl phosphonate, alkyl phosphate or aryl phosphate;

R_2 is ~~$COOR_5$~~ $\underline{OR_5}$, ~~$C(=0)NH(CHR_5)_m\text{-}COOR_5$~~ $\underline{NH(CHR_5)_m\text{-}COOR_5}$, $NH(CHR_5)_mCON(R_5)R_6$, ~~$C(=0)N(R_5)R_6$~~ $\underline{N(R_5)R_6}$ or $NH(CHR_5)_m$ OH;

R_3 is H or alkyl;

R_4 is H, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, heteroaryl or alkyl;

R_5 and R_6 are independently H, lower alkyl, aryl, hydroxy alkyl, ~~amio~~ amino alkyl, heteroaryl, lower alkylene-aryl, lower alkylene-heteroaryl or lower ~~cycoalkyl~~ cycloalkyl; and m is 0-6.

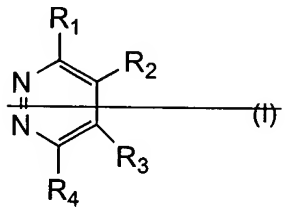
2. (Original) The compound of claim 1 wherein said aryl is phenyl, naphthyl or substituted phenyl.

3. (Original) The compound of claim 2 wherein said phenyl is substituted by halo, lower alkyl, nitro, amino, acylamino, hydroxyl, lower alkoxy, trifluoromethyl, alkyl sulfonyl, morpholinoethoxy or morpholino-sulfonyl.

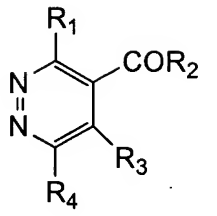
4. (Original) The compound of claim 1 wherein said heteroaryl is pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, thiozolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, triazinyl, quinolyl or isoquinolyl.

5–8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition for inhibiting interleukin-1β protease comprising the formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



(I)



(I)

wherein

R_1 is halogen, aromatic ether, alkyl sulfonate, aryl sulfonate, alkyl phosphonate, aryl phosphonate, alkyl phosphate or aryl phosphate;

R_2 is ~~$COOR_5$~~ OR_5, ~~$C(=O)NH(CHR_5)_m\text{-}COOR_5$~~ $NH(CHR_5)_m\text{-}COOR_5$, $NH(CHR_5)_mCON(R_5)R_6$, ~~$C(=O)N(R_5)R_6$~~ $N(R_5)R_6$ or $NH(CHR_5)_m$ OH;

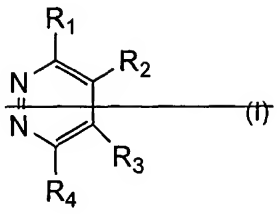
R_3 is H or alkyl;

R_4 is H, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, heteroaryl or alkyl;

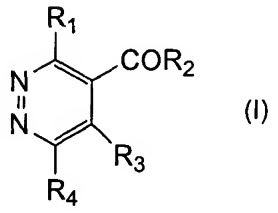
R_5 and R_6 are independently H, lower alkyl, aryl, hydroxy alkyl, ~~amio~~ amino alkyl, heteroaryl, lower alkylene-aryl, lower alkylene-heteroaryl or lower ~~cycoalkyl~~ cycloalkyl; and m is 0-6 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

10–13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently amended) A method of inhibiting interleukin-1β protease activity in a mammal in need of such treatment comprising administering to said mammal an effective inhibitory amount of a pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of the formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



~~(I)~~



(I)

wherein

R_1 is halogen, aromatic ether, alkyl sulfonate, aryl sulfonate, alkyl phosphonate, aryl phosphonate, alkyl phosphate or aryl phosphate;

R_2 is ~~$COOR_5$~~ OR_5, ~~$C(=O)NH(CHR_5)_m COOR_5$~~ $NH(CHR_5)_m$-$COOR_5$, $NH(CHR_5)_mCON(R_5)R_6$, ~~$C(=O)N(R_5)R_6$~~ $N(R_5)R_6$ or $NH(CHR_5)_m$ OH;

R_3 is H or alkyl;

R_4 is H, substituted or unsubstituted aryl, heteroaryl or alkyl;

R_5 and R_6 are independently H, lower alkyl, aryl, hydroxy alkyl, ~~amio~~ amino alkyl, heteroaryl, lower alkylene-aryl, lower alkylene-heteroaryl or lower ~~cycoalkyl~~ cycloalkyl; and m is 0-6 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

15–18 (Canceled).